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Artists of Abraham Lincoln portraits

Gustav Bartsch

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

Seventy-One Years Ago Lincoln Freed the Slaves; Author Reviews Race's Progress Since That Time

Renowned Negro
Writer Says Record is
One of Remarkable
Headway

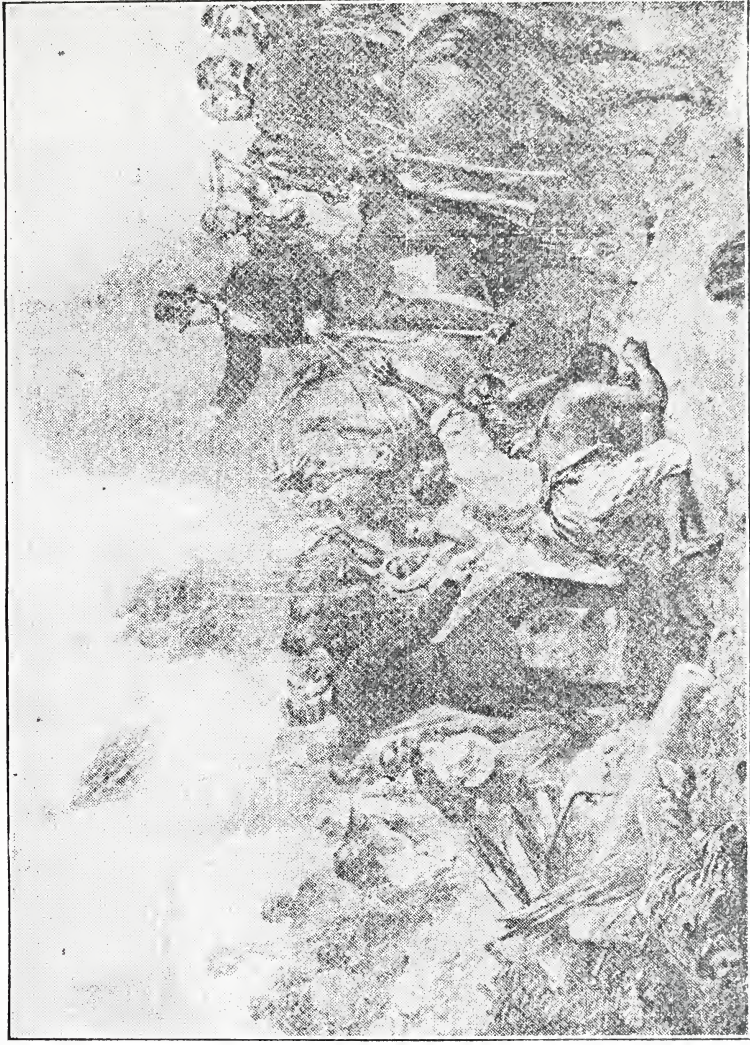
By James Weldon Johnson

Author of "The Autobiography of
an Ex-Colored Man," "Black
Manhattan," and Other Books

Seventy-one years have passed since Lincoln signed the emancipation proclamation—the first step in the freeing of America's 4,000,000 Negroes. The first step, however, was not the last. The slaves were not made free; they were merely turned loose. They were loosed, illiterate, penniless and homeless; thrown instantly into a civilization, into an economic, a social and political system with which they had not had the least opportunity to learn to cope. They were thrown not into a helpful but a hostile environment, the hostility of which was made more bitter by subsequent events.

In the revolution that resulted in the liberation of the slaves, the only factors directed toward the Negro were military and political factors. By the time he was freed, and by the other given an unstable status of citizenship. At the present time it is not possible to contemplate the statesmanship of the seventh decade of the last century without being amazed at its utter lack of social vision and social vision was what the epoch, as it concerned the freed men, demanded most of all.


The only social wisdom manifested in the situation was shown not by statesmen but by missionaries, men and women who, following quickly behind the liberating Union armies, set into the South and set up schools.



Abraham Lincoln at City Point, Va., on March 27, 1865

A Contemporary Lithograph by G. Bartsch. From the Original in the Lincoln Collection of Harry MacNeil Bland

Manuscript Appendix, 2-11-34



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Thirst for Knowledge

The desire of the Negro to acquire knowledge and his ability to assimilate it constitute the cornerstone of all that the race has achieved since emancipation. Had the Negro lacked either this urge or this capacity he would not have advanced or even held his own. And it is doubtful if the South could have come up out of the chaos left by the Civil war had it not been for the black population slipping backward and downward instead of pressing forward and upward.

By emancipation the Negro was made legally free. Later, by constitutional amendments she was made legally a voter. A slip of paper was placed in his hand and he was told to exercise his rights of citizenship. This period in which the freed man began to exercise the right of suffrage has come to be recorded by nearly all contemporary historians and accepted by a majority of the American people as constituting the most shameful page in United States history.

The political rights that had been conferred on the Negro had nothing real and solid to support them; they merely hung on the letter of the law and could not withstand the assaults successively made on them by means in intimidation, violence, fraud and quasi-legal expedients. By the beginning of the present century the Negro had in effect been disfranchised throughout the "Solid South," and was confronted with the task of regaining, mainly through his own efforts, his lost status.

Fights for Rights

He has gone about this task with intelligence and determination. In addition to qualifying himself more fully for the rights and privileges of citizenship, he has taken his case into the courts.

This phase of endeavor on the part of Negroes is depreciated by large numbers of people who feel that the race could be using this energy in making gains that would be more concrete. There are many others who pretend to feel that this effort is a subversive one, involving the overthrow of white supremacy and the blotting out of Anglo-Saxon civilization. But the American Negro knows that however great or small the power of the ballot may be, he needs it.

The race has made progress in all the basic phases of our national life. Starting from almost zero, Negroes—in round numbers—now own 700,000 homes, operate 1,000,000 farms, conduct 70,000 businesses and hold accumulated wealth to the amount of \$2,000,600,000.

But this article would be inadequate if it represented the Negro only as a beneficiary, only as having received or gained something. It would even be inadequate if it stopped after presenting the Negro's remarkable record of self-help and self-development. For the Negro has been a giver as well as a receiver, a positive force in the making of American civilization a contributor to our common cultural store.

Valuable Contributions

Many of the Negro's contributions of material values are so obvious that they cannot be overlooked; for example, his gift of labor, largely to which one entire section of our country is a land of roads and railroads, of gardens and farms, of fruits and harvests. But the Negro has also been a contributor of esthetic, intellectual and spiritual values.

There are his folk-art creations; his sacred music—the spirituals; his secular music—instrumental and

there are recognizable names in all the main branches of art. Among those who have gained a place in the list of American writers are Paul Laurence Dunbar, W. E. B. Dubois, Charles W. Chesnut, B. D. Dubois, Brathwaite, Claude McCauley, Hughes, Sterling Brown, Jean Toomer, Walter White, Alain Locke, Benjamin Brawley, Carter G. Woodson, Jessie Fauset, Nella Larsen, Rudolph Fisher and George S. Schuyler.

Among the concert and opera singers are Roland Hayes, Marian Anderson, Paul Robeson, Marian Anderson, Ray Charles, Moten, Cole-Talbert, Abbie Mitchell and Caterina Jarboro. In musical composition are Harry T. Burleigh, J. Rosamond Johnson, Will Marion Cook, Clarence Dett, William Grant Still, Charles C. White, W. C. Handy, Hall Johnson and Duke Ellington.

Among the well known in the theatrical world are Bert Williams, Charles Gilpin, Paul Robeson, Julius Bledsoe, Florence Mills, Ethel Waters, Josephine Baker, Rose McClendon,

Frank Wilson, Wesley Hill, Daniel Haines, Richard B. Harrison and Bill Robinson. In moving pictures a cataloguing that is a field in itself which Negroes have many times attained pre-eminence, and the list is very.

The progress made by the Negro since emancipation has not been short of marvelous. It would have been noteworthy if it had been less. The Negro's self-encouragement and hearty co-operation with the whole American people. Yet there is little time to stop for congratulations. The Negro is still the victim of mob violence and lynching. In many of the states he still has the right to trial by due process and to equal protection of the law, and to all of these he has still to be accorded a fair and equal chance to earn a living.

The work begun by Lincoln has gone forward, but it is not finished. To paraphrase his own immortal utterance—"On this, the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of Lincoln's birth, it is for the nation to dedicate itself to the great task of carrying on that work until it is completed."—Copyright 1924.

There have been a number of Negro inventors. Elijah McCoy had 57 patents to his credit, most of them having to do with automatic lubrication. For nearly half a century, McCoy's lubricating cup was the standard of the world. The most revolutionary invention of the Negro was that of Jan E. Malzelinger, who was born in Dutch Guiana, who was born in Dutch Guiana, who was born in Dutch Guiana.

vocal; his folklore—the Uncle Remus stories and their plantation tales, the spirituals. The spirituals make up a mass of home music, unsurpassed among the folk songs of the world and in poignancy of beauty unequalled. They constitute the finest distinctive artistic creation, sprung from the native soul, the spur and backbone of our peculiar conditions, that America has to offer. The secular music, which runs the wide gamut from a crooning lullaby to the barbaric frenzy of a jazz band, is no longer racial. It has been sophisticated, taken over, and made a medium for national expression musically. It has become "American popular music." The dances dominate the stage and dance floors.

Among the Writers These folk creations are evidence of the power to create that which has the vital spark, the universal appeal; and they contain the promise of individual and conscious Negro artists. The fulfillment of this promise has begun to be realized.

Ich offeriere freibleibend — Ich bitte mir direkt anzubieten — Ich erbitte direkt per Post, falls vollständig und
gut erhalten — Zahlung nach Empfang direkt — Bestelltes bereits verkauft — Laut Angebot — Zur Ansicht
I can supply if not sold in the meantime — Please report — Please forward
Je vous offre sous réserve de vente — Je Vous prie de m'offrir — Veuillez m'expédier
Offro — Vogliate offrir — Favorite spedirci sottofascia

" Lincoln in City Point ". German impression, design.
& lithographed by G. Bartsch. Printed by
J. Hesse, Berlin. Published by O. Seehagen,
Berlin, about 1865. In large folio size. \$ 15.-
Fine decorative piece.
With large margin.

